

~~SECRET~~

SNIE 31-61

Advance Copy of the Estimate

13 December 1961

*SPECIAL NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE*

SHORT-TERM INDIAN INTENTIONS  
TOWARD GOA



NOTE: This is an advance copy of the estimate as approved by the United States Intelligence Board. The printed text will be circulated within five days of this issuance.

*Central Intelligence Agency*

~~SECRET~~

*Submitted by the*

**DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE**

*The following intelligence organizations participated in the preparation of this estimate: The Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Defense, the Army, the Navy, the Air Force, and The Joint Staff.*

*Concurred in by the*

**UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD**

*on 13 December 1961. Concurring were the Director of Intelligence and Research, Department of State; The Director, Defense Intelligence Agency; the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Department of the Army; the Assistant Chief of Naval Operations (Intelligence), Department of the Navy; the Assistant Chief of Staff, Intelligence, USAF; the Director for Intelligence, Joint Staff; and the Director of the National Security Agency. The Atomic Energy Commission Representative to the USIB and the Assistant Director, Federal Bureau of Investigation, abstained, the subject being outside of their jurisdiction.*

**CLASSIFICATION OF TITLE IS OFFICIAL USE ONLY  
WHEN USED SEPARATELY**

SECRET

C E N T R A L I N T E L L I G E N C E A G E N C Y

13 December 1961

SUBJECT: SNIE 31-61: SHORT-TERM INDIAN INTENTIONS TOWARD GOA

THE PROBLEM

To estimate the likelihood of Indian military action against Goa in the near future.

THE ESTIMATE

1. During the past few weeks India has set the stage for military action against Goa. Nehru has publicly hedged his longstanding policy that the Portuguese colony must be obtained only by peaceful means. Thirty thousand Indian troops have been concentrated in the area adjacent to Goa; air and naval forces are on the alert. There is little doubt that India has the military power to take over Goa in very short order, although an attack would probably meet with stiff resistance, at least initially. Governmental machinery over a wide area has been set in motion to prepare and support an invasion. Public opinion is clamoring

SECRET

SECRET

for military action to respond to border incidents portrayed as Portuguese provocations; and agitation by Goan elements in India (mostly leftist-oriented) is going into high gear.

2. The Government of India is well aware of the value of these actions as psychological pressure on Portugal; indeed many of them may originally have been taken primarily as part of a war of nerves. Evidence concerning the Indian intention to launch an invasion of Goa is conflicting; however, a strong momentum in favor of invasion has been developed.

3. As of the present date, we believe that Nehru has yet to make a final decision as to whether there will be an invasion. This decision will be influenced by numerous and complex factors. Probably the most important factor militating against an invasion is what we believe to be Nehru's longstanding conviction that the acquisition of Goa is not so essential to India's national interests as to justify its seizure by military force. This is reinforced by his general desire to discourage the use of force as an instrument of policy and by his concern over the adverse impact such action would have on his own and India's image abroad. Opposition by responsible Western press and public opinion, as well as by friendly Western governments (not least the US), would also have considerable restraining influence.

- 2 -

SECRET

SECRET

4. Influencing Nehru in the other direction will be the temptation to eliminate in a rapid one-shot operation a longstanding and personally distasteful colonial problem about which he feels deeply. He will also be conscious of the favorable effect vigorous action is likely to have on the Congress Party's position in February's elections. In addition, it might be useful in rehabilitating India's image with the more radical Afro-Asian nations, whose coolness towards Nehru's moderate approach to colonial problems have grown since the Belgrade meeting. Krishna Menon, who needs public support in a tough re-election contest and who has strong anti-Western inclinations, is using his position as Defense Minister and his considerable personal influence with Nehru to try to swing the balance in favor of action.

5. In general, the balance of all those forces on Nehru will vary from day to day. The decision could be forced by events. Killings caused by the movement into Goa of Indian political agitators, an uprising within Goa, or aggressive action by Portuguese forces could precipitate an invasion. On the other hand, a conciliatory approach by Lisbon or a successful take-over of one of the lesser Portuguese enclaves outside Goa itself might be interpreted as victories eliminating the need of invasion.

6. Clearly there is strong evidence pointing to an invasion -- the military and political preparations have gone so far as to be

- 3 -

SECRET

SECRET

difficult to reverse without some loss of prestige to the Indian Government. Although the Indians perhaps still hope that their war-like activities will extract concessions from the Portuguese, we doubt that the Lisbon Government will move far enough -- if at all -- to meet the Indian requirements. However, relying chiefly on our judgment of what Nehru conceives to be India's basic interests and our assessment of his past behavior, we believe that the chances of a direct military invasion are still about even.

- 4 -

SECRET